

NOT FOR PUBLICATION UNTIL RELEASED
BY THE HOUSE ARMED SERVICES
COMMITTEE SUBCOMMITTEE ON TACTICAL
AIR AND LAND FORCES

STATEMENT

OF

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BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON TACTICAL AIR AND LAND FORCES

OF THE

HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

ON

MARINE CORPS MODERNIZATION

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Introduction

Chairman Turner, Ranking Member Sanchez, and distinguished members of this Subcommittee, we appreciate the opportunity to appear here today and discuss Marine Corps modernization. As always, we thank you for your continued support to our Marines, Sailors and their families.

The Marine Corps remains the nation's premiere Expeditionary Force in Readiness. This means that we remain most ready when the nation is least ready to answer the call globally and respond to all matter of unforeseen events. We operate capably and freely throughout the spectrum of threats, whether they are conventional, irregular or the uncertain hybrid areas where they overlap. Our ability to deploy from the sea in austere environments at a time and place of our choosing - a significant asymmetric, strategic and operational advantage- remains our most important characteristic.

Our modernization investments allow us to develop and sustain a ready and flexible force that serves as a highly effective hedge against global and regional instability. Our innovative spirit, strong leadership, and enduring stewardship of the Nation's resources guide our modernization efforts. We invest in our Marines as they are the foundation of the Marine Corps. We continue to reset our warfighting equipment and reconstitute our force after more than a decade of combat operations. We maintain our investments in the research and development of new equipment and technologies that ensure our nation's crisis response force remains relevant and ready well into the 21st century.

However, as fiscal realities continue to constrain the Department of Defense's budget, the Marine Corps will postpone some critical investments over the next few years in order to maintain near-term readiness as detailed in the Fiscal Year 2015 President's Budget. As America's crisis response force, however, your Corps does not have a choice. We are required to maintain a posture that facilitates our ability to deploy at a moment's notice. While the Bipartisan Budget Act provided some certainty that will allow us to sustain ourselves and mitigate some gaps in the near term, full implementation of the sequestration-level caps outlined in the Budget Control Act will force us into a less ready force while also imposing severe restrictions on our modernization efforts.

The modernization of our ground and rotorcraft equipment is critical to the success of the Marine Corps to meet an international security environment that will remain uncertain and complicated. Crises, such as responding to natural disasters such as Typhoon Haiyan or evacuating United States citizens from unstable environments, will continue to arise at an ever increasing pace. The 2014 QDR states, “(t)he United States will likely face a broad array of threats and opportunities and must prepare to address both effectively in the coming years.” Among these threats is the rapid diffusion of disruptive technologies to both state and non-state actors. In what has been described as a ‘new normal,’ extremism, economic disruption, identity politics and social change generate new potential security threats at an accelerating pace.

The recently approved “Expeditionary Force 21” is the Marine Corps’ capstone concept that establishes our vision and goals for the next 10 years. It provides a plan for guiding the design and development of the future force that will be asked to fight and win in this new environment. It will inform future decisions regarding how we will adjust our organizational structure to exploit the value of regionally focused forces and it provides the basis for future Navy and Marine Corps capability development to meet the challenges of the 21st Century. Expeditionary Force 21 provides guidance for how the Marine Corps will be postured, organized, trained, and equipped to fulfill the responsibilities and missions required around the world. Through Expeditionary Force 21 we intend to operate from the sea and provide the right sized force in the right place, at the right time. Our FY 2015 budget submission reflects the tenets of this vision.

Equipment Modernization

With the smallest modernization budget in the Department of Defense, the Marine Corps continually seeks to leverage the investments of other services. Within our budget submission, there are many areas of joint investment and programs, from tactical vehicles to personal protective equipment. We avoid redundant development efforts and focus our slim modernization resources in those areas that are the most fiscally prudent and those which promise the most operationally effective payoffs for the joint force.

Innovative war-fighting approaches and can-do leadership are hallmarks of the Corps, but these cannot overcome the vulnerabilities created by our rapidly aging fleet of vehicles, systems

and aircraft. As previously discussed, long-term shortfalls in modernization will have a detrimental impact on readiness and would ultimately cost lives during crises. At some point, sustaining fleets of severely worn vehicles becomes inefficient and no longer cost-effective, diverting modernization resources from an already small account, degrading our ability to effectively operate in the complex security environment of today and the future.

ACV

The Amphibious Combat Vehicle (ACV) is the Marine Corps' top ground modernization priority and the FY 2015 President's Budget request includes \$106 million for this effort. Many of our systems show the signs of age, but none more than the current Amphibious Assault Vehicle (AAV) which has been in service since 1972. The legacy AAV has served the Corps well for over 40 years, but faces multiple component obsolescence issues that affect readiness, sustainment costs, safety, and our ability to respond from the sea. The ACV is needed to replace this aging fleet.

Following the cancellation of Expeditionary Fighting Vehicle (EFV) due to affordability, the Marine Corps has assessed multiple alternatives to satisfy the need for a replacement for the AAV. The Corps conducted a series of studies to reexamine the required capability and the preferred alternative for a modern amphibious combat vehicle. Included in this effort was the development of the Marine Corps Ground and Tactical Vehicle Strategy which validated the need for a mix of vehicles. Also included was the 2011 establishment of an Amphibious Capabilities Working Group that examined current and emerging intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities, strike capabilities, and their integration into potential adversaries' approaches to anti-access, area denial. We concluded that our concepts for operational maneuver from the sea and ship-to-objective maneuver remain valid, but that, in the face of the evolving and proliferating threat, to include future loitering top-attack munitions, guided rockets, artillery, missiles, and mortars, we must continue to refine our complimentary portfolio of capabilities and be prepared to launch initial entry forces from a range of distances from the shore.

Prior to initiation of the ACV program, we further conducted an extended and very detailed material solutions analysis to ensure that we fully understood the technical and cost risks

of potential solutions, as well as required capability trades to stay within affordability parameters. This analysis reviewed the results of prior analysis, verified the required capabilities, and quantified the technical feasibility, operational value, capability trades and opportunity costs of potential alternatives to provide an affordable mix of vehicles to satisfy the combat vehicle pillar of Operational Maneuver from the Sea. This comprehensive evaluation, which drew upon the best brains within the Navy, Marine Corps, and industry, validated the presumption that there was no single solution that would optimize performance both at sea and ashore.

Leveraging work done on the earlier Marine Personnel Carrier (MPC) program, we also examined commercial off-the-shelf/non-developmental wheeled combat vehicles and discovered several important points. First, modern wheeled vehicles have substantially closed the maneuver performance gap that previously existed between tracked and wheeled vehicles with improved cross country performance. Second, current wheeled vehicle technology contributes to improved protection against mines and improvised explosive devices. Third, wheeled vehicles can provide a limited capability for water mobility.

The current ACV program has subsequently been refined to reflect a family of systems approach to the military problem – the necessity to conduct amphibious operations rapidly from further offshore while enhancing protected mobility for the mission on land. It leverages experience gained in the EFV program, the MPC program, the ACV material solution analysis, the current threat analysis, and combat experience.

The ACV will be procured on a phased approach in concert with a revision to our concept of operations for littoral maneuver. ACV, Phase I will provide a robust capability to maneuver and survive ashore, which would provide our ground combat element with the modern capabilities they need to conduct the full range of military operations ashore while complementing the existing AAV fleet. The ACV will conduct most of its ship-to-shore movement via existing and programmed high-speed connectors.

In parallel with the development and procurement of a wheeled ACV in phase 1 of the program, we will mitigate near term risk in high end amphibious assault operations by fully funding survivability upgrades in a limited number of AAVs. An additional initiative to improve

sustainability of the AAV fleet is being developed that will focus on obsolescence drivers and improving reliability that will allow the AAV to serve as an effective bridge until it is replaced by the ACV Phase II.

Our long-term Phase II effort will continue research and development to explore capabilities that better enable us to conduct extended range littoral maneuver from ship to shore. The fruits of this phased effort are aimed at producing an amphibious vehicle capable of deploying from greater distances and speeds that ensure greater stand-off distances for the Naval Forces. Given continuing advancements in applicable technologies, we believe that further investment in these technologies will lead to the envisioned high water speed capability. While high-speed technology exists today, it currently requires too many capability tradeoffs to be an acceptable solution.

Other Ground Programs

Our ground vehicle modernization strategy is to sequentially modernize priority capabilities, reduce equipment inventory requirements wherever possible, and judiciously sustain remaining equipment. Our plans focus on achieving the right mix of assets, while balancing performance, payload, survivability, fuel efficiency, transportability and cost.

While the ACV remains the Marine Corps' number one priority, it will be part of a broader acquisition strategy aimed at providing the Marine Corps with balanced maneuver and mobility capabilities and capacities. This strategy involves retaining and recapitalizing portions of our Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicle and High Mobility Multi Wheeled Vehicle (HMMWV) fleets. In addition to preserving these legacy systems we remain firmly partnered with the U.S. Army in fielding a Joint Light Tactical Vehicle (JLTV) that lives up to its name, while also being affordable.

JLTV

The JLTV is needed to provide the Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF) with modern expeditionary light combat and tactical mobility while increasing the protection of our light vehicle fleet. Working closely with the Army as the lead Service, the Marine Corps is an equal partner in developing this key system in the tactical wheeled vehicle fleet of the joint force.

The FY15 budget request includes \$11.5M for RDT&E and \$7.5M for procurement of seven test vehicles. Between FY16-21 the Marine Corps will purchase and field a total of 5,500 vehicles which will replace approximately one-third of our legacy HMMWV fleet. The JLTV will greatly enhance reliability and survivability from these overburdened platforms that currently perform critical missions in unforgiving conditions.

MRAP

Complementary to JLTV, the Marine Corps has an enduring requirement to keep a large portion of our current MRAP fleet for those future threat environments that require large and heavily armored ground mobility options. We will place MRAPs in our Prepositioning Programs, with designated MEF units for potential use during contingencies, position them at various training and exercise locations and place several hundred in long and short-term storage programs. The Marine Corps will also make the excess portion of its MRAP fleet available for inter-service transfer and to other partner nations who have identified a requirement for Excess Defense Articles (EDA).

In March, the Marine Corps revisited its enduring requirement to ensure we retain the right mix and quantity of MRAPs. We concluded that an increased number of MRAPs was critical to support the realities of today's security environment. The new MRAP strategy calls for the retention of just over 2,500 vehicles following the conclusion of Marine Corps operations in Afghanistan. To fulfill this enduring requirement, we will return the balance of our MRAPs currently in Afghanistan today, leaving none to be demilitarized in theater.

LAV

The FY15 budget includes a request for \$77.7M to upgrade a portion of our Light Armored Vehicle (LAV) fleet. The upgrades made to the Command and Control (LAV-C2) and Anti-Tank (LAV-AT) variants will both extend the life of this important platform and provide lethality and survivability upgrades that are sorely needed to maintain the relevance of this unique platform on the battlefield. In addition to ensuring the operational effectiveness of these vehicles through 2035 it will align the main weapon system of the LAV-AT with similar systems in the Army increasing commonality, and gaining overall efficiencies in both the acquisition of parts and ammunition.

Connectors

The Navy Marine Corps team will continue its investment in future connectors. These connectors with enhanced speed and range will provide future expeditionary force commanders greater flexibility to operate in contested environments. The President's Budget includes \$191 million for the Ship to Shore Connector (SSC) air-cushioned vehicles and \$4 million for the Surface Connector Replacement (SC(X)(R)) program that will replace the aging LCUs. These platforms are essential in connecting the combat power and logistical sustainment that the sea base provides, with the forces that are operating in the littorals and inland for all missions. We will continue to explore future connector options that will increase our ability to exploit the sea as maneuver space by increasing range, speed, and capacity.

G/ATOR

In addition to our critical investments in mobility, the FY15 budget includes a request for \$89.2M to procure the next generation radar that will begin to replace five of our legacy systems. These funds will support the second low rate initial production contract to deliver units to the Marine Corps for operational assessment. The Ground/Air Task Oriented Radar is a multi-role, ground based, expeditionary radar that satisfies the capabilities requirements of both Marine Air Command and Control System and Counter Fire/Counter Battery systems. This critical system interfaces with existing Navy systems and provides unprecedented reach volume and precision to identify and track both friendly and hostile forces.

Individual Equipment Modernization

The Marine Corps acquisition community is also committed to delivering required warfighting capabilities to our individual Marines in a timely and affordable manner. Over the past decade of combat, the importance of individual mobility through better performance and lighter weight has become evident. As performance has increased, so has the cost of providing it. Our goal is to provide Marines the equipment that gives them the mobility and confidence to go in harm's way and accomplish the Nation's objectives. In collaboration with the Army, our acquisition efforts strive to attain the right balance between performance, weight and affordability.

The Marine Corps is committed to using every resource available to maximize the overall combat effectiveness and survivability of our Marines within the current fiscal realities. Towards that end, and in addition to such major programs such as JLTV, the Marine Corps and the Army continually leverage each other's research and development efforts on individual protective equipment

A recent example of such joint coordination and collaboration is the Enhanced Combat Helmet (ECH). Using the latest lightweight material technology, the ECH provides increased ballistic capability for Marines on the battlefield at the same weight as the current Lightweight Helmet and it is the first ever helmet designed to meet small arm rifle threats. The ECH is in full production and Marines in I MEF and II MEF began receiving this advanced helmet in March.

Another program, the Modular Scalable Protective System, focuses on approaching the protection of the warfighter as an integrated system and aims to provide a single, scalable system with load distribution capabilities. The development of a single system that scales across all Armor Protection Levels will reduce life cycle costs, operational footprint and overall weight while providing greater mobility through integrated load carriage and flexibility. The Modular Scalable Vest (MSV), the developmental torso protective system of the MSPS, currently provides these capabilities in prototype form.

As we strive to fulfill our solemn commitment to provide the most capable protective systems to all of our Marines, we approach the sizing/fit of body armor as a question of body stature rather than gender. Stemming from surveys and workshops with respect to sizing, fit and comfort of body armor, results indicated a need for smaller stature Improved Modular Tactical Vests (IMTVs). Subsequently, we are currently procuring 3,780 IMTV "Short" sizes with initial fielding later this year. The development of the small stature IMTV allows for better fit, mobility, and longer combat effectiveness for all Marines on the battlefield.

MV-22

The Fiscal Year 2015 President's Budget requests \$ 61.2 million in RDT&E,N for continued product improvements and \$1.53 billion in APN for procurement of 19 MV-22s (Lot 18) under the current multi-year procurement contract (FY13-FY17). This contract will procure at least 93 MV-22s over five years and includes significant savings of approximately \$1 billion

when compared to single year procurements. The APN request also includes \$135.6 million to support the ongoing Operations and Safety Improvement Programs (OSIP), including Correction of Deficiencies and Readiness Improvements.

MV-22 Osprey vertical flight capabilities coupled with the speed, range, endurance of fixed-wing transports, are enabling effective execution of current missions that were previously unachievable on legacy platforms. This capability is at the core of the Marine Corps' recently fielded SPMAGTF-CR. The Marine Corps continues to field and transition aircraft on time. As the MV-22 approaches the 200,000 flight hour milestone, it is on pace to be one of the safest of any DoD aircraft dating back to the 1960s.

CH-53K Heavy Lift Replacement Program

The Fiscal Year 2015 President's Budget requests \$573.2 million RDT&E,N to continue Engineering and Manufacturing Development (EMD) of the CH-53K. The program is completing assembly of the first five test aircraft; one Ground Test Vehicle (GTV) and four Engineering Development Model (EDM) aircraft. The GTV has successfully completed numerous ground test requirements, to include the "Bare Head Light-Off." The program is currently on schedule to execute its first flight by the end of 2014. During Fiscal Year 2015, the program will continue to execute developmental test flights, deliver the final EDM, and start assembly of four System Demonstration Test Article (SDTA) aircraft which will be production representative aircraft utilized for Operational Test. The program will also contract for two additional SDTA aircraft in order to effectively demonstrate that manufacturing processes are mature and stable when the program transitions to production in FY16.

The new-build CH-53K will fulfill land and sea based heavy-lift requirements not resident in any of today's platforms, and contribute directly to the increased agility, lethality, and presence of joint task forces and MAGTFs. The CH-53K will transport 27,000 pounds of external cargo out to a range of 110 nautical miles, nearly tripling the CH-53E's lift capability under similar environmental conditions, while fitting into the same shipboard footprint. The CH-53K will also provide unparalleled lift capability under high-altitude and hot weather conditions, greatly expanding the commander's operational reach. Expeditionary heavy-lift capabilities will continue to be critical to successful land and sea-based operations in future anti-access, area-

denial environments, enabling sea-basing and the joint operating concepts of force application and focused logistics.

The Fiscal Year 2015 President's Budget requests \$38.2 million in APN for both near and mid-term enhancements to the nearly 30 year old CH-53E. These modifications include Condition Based Maintenance software upgrades, T-64 Engine Reliability Improvement Program kit installations, Critical Survivability Upgrade (CSU) installations, Smart Multifunction Color Display (SMCD) and sustainment efforts such as Kapton wiring replacement and improved Engine Nacelles. With the exception of the CSU and SMCD, the same modifications are also made to the USN MH-53E helicopters.

UH-1Y // AH-1Z

The Fiscal Year 2015 President's Budget requests \$44.1 million in RDT&E,N for continued product improvements and \$859.7 million in APN for 26 H-1 Upgrade aircraft: 15 UH-1Y and 11 AH-1Z. The program is a key modernization effort designed to resolve existing safety deficiencies and enhance operational effectiveness of the H-1 fleet. The 85 percent commonality between the UH-1Y and AH-1Z will significantly reduce life-cycle costs and the logistical footprint, while increasing the maintainability and deployability of both aircraft. The program will provide the Marine Corps with 349 H-1 aircraft through a combination of new production and a limited quantity of remanufactured aircraft.

The H-1 Upgrades Program is replacing the Marine Corps' UH-1N and AH-1W helicopters with state-of-the-art UH-1Y "Yankee" and AH-1Z "Zulu" aircraft. The new aircraft are fielded with integrated glass cockpits, world-class sensors, and advanced helmet-mounted sight and display systems. The future growth plan includes a digitally-aided, close air support system designed to integrate these airframes, sensors, and weapons systems together with ground combat forces and other capable DoD aircraft. Integration of low-cost weapons such as the Advanced Precision Kill Weapon System II (APKWS II) has increased lethality while reducing collateral damage.

In December 2011, to address existing attack helicopter shortfalls, the Marine Corps decided to pursue an all AH-1Z Build New (ZBN) procurement strategy and leave AH-1W airframes in the inventory rather than removing them from service to begin the remanufacture

process. The transition to an all ZBN airframe strategy began with Lot 10 (Fiscal Year 2013) as reflected in the current USMC program of record. The aircraft mix is 37 remanufactured AH-1Z and 152 ZBN aircraft. The total aircraft procurement numbers remain the same at 160 UH-1Ys and 189 AH-1Zs for a total of 349 aircraft.

Conclusion

On behalf of the Marines and Sailors who provide the Nation with its forward deployed crisis-response force, we thank you for your constant support in an era of competing challenges. We are proud of our reputation for frugality and we remain one of the best values for the defense dollar. These critical modernization investments, among many others, will ensure our success not if, but when future conflict occurs. Fiscal uncertainty has threatened both our capacity and capabilities, forcing us to sacrifice our long-term health for near-term readiness. Recognizing these fiscal challenges, we remain committed to fielding the most ready Marine Corps the Nation can afford.

The priorities reflected in the FY15 budget are the modernization efforts that we must have to remain an affordable insurance policy for the American people. These efforts will allow the Marine Corps to remain a highly efficient and effective hedge against global and regional tensions that cause instability. As always, we will continue to provide our nation's leaders with the time and decision space they need by responding to today's crisis, with today's forces...TODAY.